

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-3 (Canceled).

4. (Currently Amended) ~~[[An]] A relay apparatus according to claim 1, further~~
comprising:

a first connection unit configured to connect with a first network;

a second connection unit configured to connect with a second network different
from the first network;

an ID generation unit configured to generate an own unique ID of its own, which
is to be allocated on the first network;

an ID notification unit configured to notify a partner device connected to the
second network through the second connection unit of the own unique ID of its own;

an ID acquisition unit configured to acquire the partner unique ID of a partner
device connected to the second network through the second connection unit;

an ID comparison unit configured to compare the own unique ID of its own with
the partner unique ID of the partner device;

a control unit which controls to set only one of the own unique ID and the partner
unique ID to make the IDs inconsistent, when it is found as a result of comparison by
the comparison unit that the own unique ID of its own coincides with the partner unique
ID of the partner device;

a device count detection unit configured to detect the number of partner devices on the first network; and

a connection limit notification unit configured to notify a user of information related to a connection limit to the partner device on the basis of a detection result of the number of partner devices by the device count detection unit.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~[[An]] A relay apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising:~~

a first connection unit configured to connect with a first network;

a second connection unit configured to connect with a second network different from the first network;

an ID generation unit configured to generate an own unique ID of its own, which is to be allocated on the first network;

an ID notification unit configured to notify a partner device connected to the second network through the second connection unit of the own unique ID of its own;

an ID acquisition unit configured to acquire the partner unique ID of a partner device connected to the second network through the second connection unit;

an ID comparison unit configured to compare the own unique ID of its own with the partner unique ID of the partner device;

a control unit which controls to set only one of the own unique ID and the partner unique ID to make the IDs inconsistent, when it is found as a result of comparison by the comparison unit that the own unique ID of its own coincides with the partner unique ID of the partner device;

an identification information collection unit configured to collect first identification information from a partner device connected to the first network through the first connection unit;

an identification information notification unit configured to notify the partner device connected to the second network through the second connection unit of the first identification information;

an identification information acquisition unit configured to acquire second identification information from the partner device connected to the second network through the second connection unit;

a reply unit configured to return the second identification information in response to an inquiry about the second identification information from the partner device connected to the first network through the first connection unit;

a device count detection unit configured to detect the number of partner devices on the first network; and

a connection limit notification unit configured to notify a user of information related to a connection limit to the partner device on the basis of a detection result of the number of partner devices by the device count detection unit.

6-11 (Canceled).

12. (Currently Amended) A network relay method according to claim 9, further of relaying a first network and a second network different from the first network,

comprising:

generating an own unique ID of its own, which is to be allocated on the first network;

notifying a partner device connected to the second network different from the first network of the own unique ID of its own;

acquiring a partner unique ID of the partner device connected to the second network;

comparing the own unique ID of its own with the partner unique ID of the partner device;

setting only one of the own unique ID and the partner unique ID to make the IDs inconsistent, when it is found as a result of comparison by the comparison unit that the own unique ID of its own coincides with the partner unique ID of the partner device;

detecting the number of partner devices on the first network; and

notifying a user of information related to a connection limit to the partner device on the basis of a detection result of the number of partner devices.

13. (Currently Amended) A network relay method according to claim 11, further of relaying a first network and a second network different from the first network,

comprising:

generating an own unique ID of its own, which is to be allocated on the first network;

notifying a partner device connected to the second network different from the first network of the own unique ID of its own;

acquiring a partner unique ID of the partner device connected to the second network;

comparing the own unique ID of its own with the partner unique ID of the partner device;

setting only one of the own unique ID and the partner unique ID to make the IDs inconsistent, when it is found as a result of comparison by the comparison unit that the own unique ID of its own coincides with the partner unique ID of the partner device;

collecting first identification information from a partner device connected to the first network;

notifying the partner device connected to the second network of the first identification information;

acquiring second identification information from the partner device connected to the second network;

returning the second identification information in response to an inquiry about the second identification information from the partner device connected to the first network;

detecting the number of partner devices on the first network; and

notifying a user of information related to a connection limit to the partner device on the basis of a detection result of the number of partner devices.

14-16 (Canceled).